

Preventing Holiday Weight Gain

It is well known that hectic schedules during the holiday wreak havoc on our health. With family, holiday planning and work demands, healthy eating habits and exercise often drop off the to-do list. And, then there are the irresistible desserts this time of year. Why do the Santa shaped treats with red and green sparkles or the blue and silver frosting star cookies taste so good that one is never enough? It's difficult to walk away from these desserts. What holiday ordinance says that second helpings should be encouraged this time of year? The memories of Christmas and Hanukah are here again. It is that time of confusion when we just can't pinpoint what pushes us over the calorie ledge. As a result, we end up disappointed around the New Year with the extra weight. We can find balance with our eating habits this season. Time to make new memories. Begin by reminding yourself that having seconds of the Potato Lakes could result in many overtime hours at the gym. Filling your plates with turkey and gravy and a side order of buttered mashed potato's may lead you back to prison meals at lunchtime- carrot and celery sticks, hold the utensils. This holiday make a promise to yourself that no matter what, healthy eating and having control are back on the "to-do" list. Adopt these eight defensive eating strategies to avoid overeating and remain in control.

- 1) **Practice stopping before you are stuffed.** Recognize we live in a culture that glorifies excess and we are victims to it. Eating slower and putting your fork down between bites will help.
- 2) **Be selective.** Don't eat things because they are within arms reach. Choose what you will eat on that table of goodies and take your time enjoying them.
- 3) **Try to eat three sensible meals at regular times** throughout the day. Skipping meals may lead you to eat larger portions of high-calorie, high-fat foods at your next meal or snack. Eat breakfast every day to control afternoon hunger pains. Choose small portions when eating at restaurants. There is no such thing as healthy portion sizes while dining out. A single meal can contain your daily caloric allowance. Consider sharing entrees and be careful with the appetizers. Often they are high calorie and contain lots of the bad fat that negatively impact your cholesterol level and waistline.
- 4) **Beware of desserts.** A single slice of holiday cheesecake from the Cheesecake Factory packs almost 800 calories and 49 grams of fat. The average adult needs about 2000 calories per day and only 45 grams of fat. Share a dessert amongst many (four friends) and just take a small portion to satisfy your palate. You will be amazed that a taste can satisfy your palate.
- 5) **Slow down and pay attention to your food when you eat.** When you inhale your food, you very effectively bypass the intricate set of "I'm full" signals that your digestive system is designed to generate. Eating slower gives your stomach and intestines time to send these messages to your brain.
- 6) **Be creative with low-calorie options.** Check out *Cooking Light* magazine for some reduced calorie and fat meals. The recipes are unbelievably good and they don't taste like they are lacking ingredients. (see recipe below)
- 7) **Keep track of the calories in the foods you eat.** No need to formally count calories just be aware of what you are eating and drinking. Beverages, for example, can be a big source of invisible calories. Keep in mind, if you have an alcoholic beverage with a cup of orange juice you get the calories from the alcohol plus the calories from two oranges.

Regular soda provides nothing but calories you don't need. If you feel counting calories is the only way to maintain control, try this helpful web site www.Fitday.com

- 8) **Spoil your appetite.** Have a snack before a meal. This helps overeating. Nutritious snacks with a little protein and a little fat starve off hunger. Some examples: Revival Baked Pasta Soy Chips (fun flavors Jalapeno, Cheddar Cha, Cha.) They have 70% less fat than potato chips and no bad fats (saturated). Other good choices:

- Soy nuts
- Dried fruit (careful how much, even though it's nutritious, it's high calorie)
- Granola bars
- Pretzels (East Shore brand- 120 cal, 3 grams of fat, 3 grams of protein)

Combine these strategies with a physically active holiday and you will surely avoid the weight gain woes. (Walter Willett, M.D., ADA)

Recipe of the Month

Red Cabbage, Cranberry and Apple Slaw

The slaw marinates in the refrigerator for a couple of hours, allowing the vinaigrette to permeate the cabbage and plump the cranberries. Stir in apples just before serving to keep them bright.

- 5 cups thinly sliced red cabbage (about 1.5 pounds)
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 ½ cups thinly sliced Granny Smith apple
- ¼ cup chopped pecans, toasted

Combine cabbage and cranberries in a large bowl. Combine vinegar and next 5 ingredients (vinegar through pepper), stirring with a whisk; drizzle over cabbage mixture, tossing gently to coat. Cover and chill 2 hours. Add apple, and toss well to combine. Sprinkle with pecans. Yield: 8 servings (serving size: 1 cup).

CALORIES 131 (29% from fat); FAT 4.2 g (sat 0.4g, mono 2.4g, poly 1 g); PROTEIN 1.7g; CARB 23.6g; FIBER 3.8g; CHOL 0mg; IRON 0.7mg; SODIUM 236mg; CALC 46mg
(Cooking Light Holiday Recipe, 2003)

Unit of the Month

Group Southwest Harbor has taken large steps to significantly enhance its Wellness Program. The Group comprehensively revamped its fitness room by hand selecting and ordering some new fitness equipment. Participation rates of the gym have increased and four other tenant units of the Group are now able to use the fitness facility too.

The Group hosted its first annual Captain's Cup on Friday, November 12th. This event promoted morale and teamwork with all personnel. Crew members participated in an array of fun physical events which included, a Tug O' War, Knot Tying Relay Course, P-6 Pump Race, Heaving Line Throw, Buoy Chain

Drag, and a Cod Toss. The following units participated: Group Southwest Harbor, Station Southwest Harbor, ANT Southwest Harbor, CGC Bridle, Team Rockland (Station Rockland & CGC Tackle), and Station Jonesport. Station Southwest Harbor won the event and will keep the huge Captain's Cup trophy for one year. Next year the fun and competition will begin again and Station SWH will fight to hold onto their 1st place standing.

The Group organizes and holds Smoking Cessation Classes twice a year, offering members the chance to quit using tobacco products. The Group also campaigns the annual Great American Smokeout by making Smoking Cessation Kits available. The kits are loaded with all kinds of goodies to help members stop the tobacco urge for the day.

The Group has an array of Work-Life Pamphlets that are readily available to personnel, subjects include many issues about health, diet, nutrition, exercise, cancer, stress, depression, disease prevention, drinking, drugs, fatigue, and safety just to name a few. So, if members have a quick question about a health topic, information is immediately at their fingertips.

The Group designed a Wellness Program pamphlet, which explains the Coast Guards policy on health, physical, and social well being. It also has information on the Physical Fitness Awards Program and website links to all types of Work-Life and Wellness resources. The brochure has been a successful way of marketing the program to ensure that members (current and new) understand the program and what it offers.

Group Southwest Harbor is a great example of how health promotion can successfully become part of the operational Coast Guard culture.

Bravo Zulu to PO Brian Lewis, Group Southwest Harbor Unit Health Promotion Coordinator, for his Unit of the Month submission.

Special thanks to Yvette Lillge, Health Promotion Manager at ISC Boston, for the Health Promotion Bulletin Feature Article and Recipe of the Month.



mailto: TSchneider@COMDT.uscg.mil



(202) 267-6624



(202) 267-6624



mailto: Ylillge@ISCBoston.uscg.mil



(617) 223-3244



(617) 223-3249